

VIII.—Notices of Recent Ornithological Publications.

1. ENGLISH.

MR. GOULD has produced two more parts of his 'Birds of Great Britain', the species treated of being as follows:—

PART XIII. August 1st, 1868.

Kite or Glead.	Grey Wagtail, in summer.
Marsh-Harrier, adult.	—, in winter.
— young.	Alpine Accentor.
Scops Eared Owl.	Hedge-Accentor or Hedge-
Tree-Creeper.	Sparrow.
Great Grey Shrike.	Red-legged Partridge.
Rose-breasted Shrike.	Spoonbill.
Snow-Bunting or Snowflake.	Gadwall.

PART XIV. September 1st, 1868.

Wood-Pigeon or Cushat.	Black-tailed Godwit.
Starling.	Little Auk.
Hoopoe.	Black Tern.
Yellow Wagtail.	White-winged Tern.
Grey-headed Wagtail.	Whiskered Tern.
Linnet.	Wood-Sandpiper.
Wheatear.	Manx Shearwater.
Bar-tailed Godwit.	

The Rose-breasted Shrike now first makes its appearance in the character of a British species. It is the well-known *Lanius minor* of Southern Europe. A single example was obtained so long ago as the year 1851 on one of the Scilly Islands, and at the time was taken for a common *L. excubitor*, under which name its occurrence was recorded by Mr. Rodd (Zoologist, p. 3300). That gentleman subsequently perceived that it was something better, and in the 'Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall' for October 1867 (pp. 352, 353) announced it under its rightful name. He also submitted the specimen to Mr. Gould, whose figure in the present work is taken from it. Averse as we are to the practice of including every stray bird of foreign origin among those which are really inhabitants of the country, a more plausible claim may be set up for this Shrike than for many other species, since it may very well have occurred before and been overlooked. In his account of the Spoonbill, Mr. Gould omits any notice of the fact that it formerly used to breed in England (as witnessed by old Sir Thomas

Browne), and in that particular differed remarkably from the Stork, which was never more than an accidental visitor, however frequently it appeared. Respecting the range of the Gadwall, Mr. Gould has forgotten a statement in this Journal (*Ibis*, 1864, p. 132), wherein that species was undeniably shown, on Mr. G. G. Fowler's authority, to breed in Iceland. In conclusion, we trust Mr. Gould will pardon us for directing his attention to the fact that he makes occasional use of the so-called "names" of Brisson, a practice to be condemned by every upholder of the system of binomial nomenclature.

Two more parts of 'Exotic Ornithology'* have appeared since our last notice of the work (*Ibis*, 1868, p. 335).

In Part VII. are figured the following American birds:—

<i>Leucopternis palliata</i> .	<i>Porzana hauxwelli</i> .
<i>Scops flammeola</i> .	— <i>melanophæa</i> .
— <i>barbarus</i>	— <i>albigularis</i> .
<i>Chætura semicollaris</i> .	— <i>leucopyrrha</i> .

Leucopternis palliata, though long ago discovered by Natterer, and now not unfrequently to be seen in collections, has but recently been formally named and described by Herr von Pelzeln under Natterer's MS. appellation, which must take precedence of Mr. Gray's name *L. polionota*, also intended for this species, since that is unaccompanied by any description. *Scops flammeola* is a pretty little Mexican and Guatemalan species, which may be "annexed" by our friends in the United States to their own fauna, as undoubted Californian specimens, from Fort Crook, exist in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution.

Chætura semicollaris is a gigantic Swift, one of De Saussure's discoveries in Mexico. It appears to be rare, as none of the many collectors who have also visited that country within the last fifteen years have met with it. The four species of *Porzana* help to illustrate a group of birds upon which our friends the authors have lately been engaged (*P. Z. S.* 1868, pp. 442–470). Complete lists of the American species of the genera *Scops* and

* *Exotic Ornithology*. By PHILIP LUTLEY SCLATER, M.A. &c., and OSBERT SALVIN, M.A. &c. Parts vii. & viii. London: Imp. 4to.

Chatura are given, and also of that section of the Crakes to which Bonaparte applied the name *Laterirallus*.

The contents of Part VIII. are—

<i>Fulica ardesiaca</i> .	<i>Geotrygon chiriquensis</i> .
— <i>armillata</i> .	<i>Cardinalis phoeniceus</i> .
— <i>leucopyga</i> .	<i>Pyrgisoma leucote</i> .
— <i>leucoptera</i> .	— <i>rubricatum</i> .
<i>Leucopternis semiplumbeus</i> .	

The first four plates of this part represent four out of the six species of Coots which inhabit the southern portion of the South American continent. The intricate synonymy of these birds has been lately worked out by the authors in the Zoological 'Proceedings,' and additions and corrections made to Dr. Hartlaub's excellent memoir published in the "extra-Heft" of the 'Journal für Ornithologie' for 1853. *Fulica chilensis* turns out to be Tschudi's *F. ardesiaca* on comparison of the types of the two species. *F. stricklandi*, Hartl., appears to be the same as Azara's "Focha," *F. leucoptera*, Vieill. We hope some day to see a figure of the wonderful species from Potosi, described by Prince Bonaparte as *F. cornuta*, and afterwards generically separated by him as *Lycornis cornuta*, of which at present the only known specimen is in the Paris Museum. The figure of *Leucopternis semiplumbeus* finishes the series of this genus; and a complete synonymatic list is given of the eight species. In Part V. of this work (*cf.* Ibis, 1868, pp. 336, 337) the authors figured what they believed to be *Geotrygon chiriquensis*, and hoped that all difficulty respecting that species was removed; but unfortunately they now find that the bird there represented must be called *G. albifacies*, the true *G. chiriquensis*, of which a figure is now given, being a distinct species, as shown by the recent acquisition of specimens, and also by the rediscovery of the type of Mr. Sclater's original description. Unfortunately the synonymy is not yet closed, as Mr. Lawrence seems to have described the same species in a recently published catalogue of the Birds of Costa Rica, of which we hope to give an extended notice in a subsequent number.

The attractions of the Nile have already engaged the attention

of several of the most valued contributors to this Journal, and have lately been set forth at some length by our excellent *confrère* Mr. A. C. Smith*. From a rigidly technical point of view, we might perhaps complain that the manner in which ornithology is treated by the author of these two handy little volumes is not such as to increase the knowledge of the science among those who use them. But who is there that has ever floated in a "dahabeah" who has cared for the most abstruse and recondite questions when lotus-eating? Such matters are left to be settled at home; and these volumes are especially intended for the Nile-traveller during his voyage. They will, we hope, induce many of our countrymen who annually visit the ancient and mysterious river, and content themselves with butchery on its banks, to pay greater attention than before to the proceeds of their bird-slaughtering expeditions, submitting their spoils to the inspection of friends at home for proper identification. We do not perceive any errors in Mr. Smith's determinations of species, so far as we can judge, not having examined his specimens; but we venture to suggest that of his unknown birds (vol. ii. pp. 275-278) no. 102 *may* be *Geron-ticus hagedash*, and no. 103 *G. calvus*, while no. 108 is, without much doubt, *Grus virgo*.

In conclusion we may remark that an Ornithology of Egypt still *se fait désirer*; and very welcome such a work would be. Might we, without impertinence, suggest the publication of a Hand-book of Egyptian Zoology to the Ray Society and Mr. Tristram when they have completed their present undertaking on the Zoology of Palestine?

That nearly a century has elapsed since any narrative of travels in Iceland should have been published in Sweden is an excellent reason why Professor Paijkull should give to his countrymen a narrative of his tour in that island. But considering the inordinate number of works of the same kind which

* The Nile and its Banks, a journal of travel in Egypt and Nubia, showing their attractions to the Archæologist, the Naturalist, and the general Tourist. By Rev. ALFRED CHARLES SMITH, M.A. London: 1868. 2 vols. sm. 8vo.

have made their appearance in this country, it is astonishing that an English translator of his book* should declare that the island and its inhabitants "are comparatively but little known to us." However, there would be no need to call the attention of the readers of 'The Ibis' to this publication were it not for the fact that Mr. Barnard has thought fit to add to his translation, by way of 'Appendix,' a "List of the Animals, Birds, Fishes, Molluscs, etc., found in Iceland; extracted from 'The Voyage en Islande, par M. Gaimard.'" We generally know what we may expect when we find "Birds, Fishes, Molluscs, etc." treated as if they were not "animals;" and on the present occasion we have not been disappointed. The list Mr. Barnard prints is offered to his readers at *third* hand. He transcribes it (with a few errors and omissions) from the volume of M. Gaimard's series which is devoted to "Zoologie et Médecine" (pp. 161-166), and written by M. Eugène Robert, who gives it as an "extraite de Gliemann"; and sure enough the original is to be found in Gliemann's work (pp. 150-170), which is nearly fifty years old†. The absurdity of such a proceeding is manifest, and any further criticism quite unnecessary. Prof. Paijkull, being a man of science, feared to tread but on his own path; his translator rushes in, and most successfully displays his ignorance of almost every branch of zoology.

2. DUTCH.

The supposition hazarded in our last number (*Ibis*, 1868, p. 476), that the ornithological portion of the work of Messrs. Schlegel and Pollen had come to an end, was premature, a Fourth and concluding *Livraison*‡ having lately made its appearance. This contains, besides a few pages wanted to complete the ac-

* A Summer in Iceland. By C. W. PAJKULL, Professor of Geology at the University of Upsala. Translated by Rev. M. R. BARNARD, B.A. &c. London: 1868. 8vo, pp. 364.

† Geographische Beschreibung von Island, von Theodor Gliemann. Altona: 1824. 8vo, pp. 232.

‡ Recherches sur la Faune de Madagascar et de ses Dépendances, &c. 2^{me} Partie. Mammifères et Oiseaux, par H. SCHLEGEL et FRANÇOIS P. L. POLLEN. Leyde: 1868. Roy. 8vo. (4^{me} Livraison.)

count of the birds collected by the Dutch naturalists, a commentary on Dr. Hartlaub's well-known and excellent little volume (*cf.* 'Ibis,' 1861, pp. 402-405), and several lists, one showing roughly the geographical distribution of birds in Madagascar and the neighbouring islands, and another the number of specimens from that subregion possessed by the Leyden Museum, amounting to upwards of 750. The commentary on Dr. Hartlaub disposes in a very off-hand manner of many species and genera of birds; and we cannot but think that a good many of the conclusions at which the authors arrive are such as they would not reach had they more evidence before them. With all its imperfections, however, the work will remain a lasting monument of the labours of Messrs. Pollen and Van Dam; and the plates are generally so well drawn that, unlike many monuments, it may always be contemplated with pleasure.

3. GERMAN.

The appearance of the first section of Herr von Pelzeln's account of the late Johann Natterer's ornithological discoveries in Brazil* has already been chronicled, and a few words of well-earned commendation were bestowed upon it†. We take the opportunity of the issue of the second part of this work, which has lately been received in this country, to explain to our readers a little more fully its contents and objects, so that its importance may be more completely appreciated.

The late Johann Natterer was, as regards the class of birds to which he principally devoted himself, perhaps the most energetic and most successful collector that has ever lived. He dedicated the eighteen best years of his life to the exploration of various parts of the great empire of Brazil, and during this period accumulated a collection of no less than 12,293 birdskins, representing about 1200 different species. Every specimen was not only most beautifully prepared, but likewise provided with a ticket on which the locality and date of collection, sex, and the

* Zur Ornithologie Brasiliens. Resultate von Johann Natterer's Reisen in den Jahren 1817 bis 1835 dargestellt von AUGUST VON PELZELN, Custos an d. k.-k. zoologischen Cabineten in Wien. II. Abtheilung. Wien, 1868-69.

† Ibis, 1868, pp. 226, 227.

collector's number was inscribed in his own handwriting. At the same time a note-book was kept in which the colour of the iris, bill and legs, form of the tongue, contents of the stomach, and various other peculiarities were carefully registered, together with remarks on its habits and the distribution of the species. Natterer returned to Europe in 1835, but unfortunately died in the prime of life, before he had hardly commenced the publication of his numerous discoveries, leaving his enormous collections almost untouched in the drawers of the Imperial Cabinet of Zoology at Vienna.

Until recently little had been done to render this valuable mass of material available for the purposes of science. But about ten years ago Herr August von Pelzeln, who had then lately succeeded to the charge of this part of the Imperial Collection, began to work out and describe the species of certain groups and to publish the results along with extracts from Natterer's MSS.* Stimulated by the favour which these papers have met with from ornithologists, and urged on by their solicitations, Herr von Pelzeln has now undertaken the great labour of preparing and publishing a complete catalogue of all the species collected by Natterer, together with descriptions of the novelties and extracts from the MS. notes of the deceased naturalist. Of this work we have the first two portions, containing the *Accipitres* and the *Passeres* down to the end of the *Dentirostres* (according to the Grayian System) now before us. The catalogue gives us not only a list of the species, with descriptions of such as are new, but likewise states the exact locality at which each specimen was obtained. To illustrate the geographical distribution still further, a tabular *résumé* is appended, in which the ground traversed by Natterer is divided into six principal "faunas," and the occurrence of each species in one or other of those "faunas" is indicated. These faunas, which are further illustrated by a map showing Natterer's routes, are as follows:—

* Herr von Pelzeln's numerous papers in the 'Sitzungsberichte' of the Vienna Academy, and in the 'Abhandlungen' of the Zoological and Botanical Association of Vienna, have been constantly referred to in 'The Ibis.'

1. *South-Brazilian Fauna*—from Curitiba and Paranagua, which were the most southern points attained by Natterer, along the coast-district up to Rio Janeiro, and the surrounding country. This fauna is all in the provinces of Sao Paulo and Rio, and is perhaps better known ornithologically in Europe than any other part of South America, from the large collections of birdskins made near Rio, and from the works of the late Prince Maximilian of Wied, Prof. Burmeister, and others. Natterer's first four journeys, from November 1817 to September 1822, were devoted to its exploration.

2. *The Central-Brazilian Fauna* embraces the basins of the streams which constitute the headwaters of the Rio Parana. Natterer traversed this district, which lies within the Brazilian provinces of Minas and Goyaz, in his fifth journey, in 1823 and 1824. Herr von Pelzeln assigns the Rio Araguay as the western boundary of this fauna; so that some portion of the watershed of the Tocantins is included in it. Natterer reached the Araguay in October 1824.

3. *The Bolivio-Brazilian Fauna*.—This title is given by the author to the portion of the province of Mattogrosso which was traversed by Natterer after crossing the Araguay on his route to Fort Principe de Beira, on the Guaporé. It embraces, therefore, portions of the watershed of the Tocantins, Paraguay, and Amazons, and includes what is generally called the "diamond-district" of Brazil. Natterer's longest sojourns in this district were at Cuyaba (in which city he stayed from December 1823 until June 1825) and Villa Bella de Mattogrosso (where he arrived in October 1826, not finally quitting it until July 1829). In Sao Vicente, near Villa Bella, on the 18th of June 1826, Natterer had the misfortune to lose his faithful assistant Sochor, and after that, we believe, travelled mainly alone. From Villa Bella Natterer descended the Guaporé to Fort Principe de Beira, embarking on the 15th of July, 1829, and reaching the latter point about the 9th of August.

4. *The Columbio-Brazilian Fauna*.—According to Herr von Pelzeln's views this Fauna includes the whole valley of the Madeira below Fort Principe, together with the main valley of the Rio Negro. Natterer, as we have already stated, passed Fort

Principe de Beira about the 10th of August 1829, and reached Borba, on the Lower Madeira, on the 24th of November. Here, and in this neighbourhood, he stopped until August 1830, and then commenced his eighth expedition up the Rio Negro. Leaving Borba on the 25th of August, he reached Barra de Rio Negro on the 10th of September, and remained there about two months. Thence he ascended the Rio Negro to San José de Marabitanas, the frontier fort of Brazil on the Rio Negro, which he reached on the 16th of January 1831. Hence excursions were made to the Venezuelan town of San Carlos, and up the rivers Xié, Içanna, and Vaupé. Finally Natterer returned to Barcellos on the 23rd of August.

5. *The Guiano-Brazilian Fauna*.—The author restricts this term (which in our opinion ought to include the whole valley of the Rio Negro, or at any rate its left bank) to the district of the Rio Branco, which Natterer ascended soon after his return to Barcellos in the autumn of 1831. At Forte do S. Joaquim, on the confines of Guiana, he passed six months, and returned to Barra at the end of August 1832.

6. *Fauna of the Lower Amazons*, i. e. of the Amazons below Barra down to the sea-coast. Natterer did not finally leave Barra until July 1834, and reached Pará in September. The next year was devoted to the investigation of the district of Pará, after which the indefatigable traveller had purposed to work along the Brazilian coast-provinces of Maranhao, Rio Grande de Norte, Parahiba, and Pernambuco, and so back to Rio. But a popular disturbance, which broke out in Pará in 1835, caused him to alter his plans. His house and effects were plundered by the insurgents, and the fine collection of living animals destined for the Imperial Menagerie at Schönbrunn destroyed. On the 15th of September 1835, he embarked at Pará for Europe, and finally quitted the scene of his labours.

We may perhaps say that we do not quite hold to Herr von Pelzeln's views as regards these six "faunas," though there can be no question of the value of the tables he has prepared to illustrate the geographical distribution of the species. We think it would have been better to have made the divisions into "faunas" coincide with the river-basins. At any rate, as al-

ready remarked, the fauna of the Madeira should be separated from that of the Rio Negro. The former, though perhaps not actually divisible from the Upper-Amazonian fauna, presents us with many peculiar species, such as *Pteroptochus thoracicus*, *Odontorhynchus cinereus*, and *Pipra nattereri*. The latter, as shown by Messrs. Selater and Salvin (P. Z. S. 1867, p. 593), is peopled with most of the familiar forms of the Guianan fauna, of which it is in fact a part.

The first part of Herr von Pelzeln's 'Ornithologie Brasiliens,' which appeared at the beginning of last year, contains a catalogue of the *Accipitres* and the Fissirostral and Tenuirostral *Passeres*. Twenty-one new species were described in it. The second part, which is just issued, contains the list of Dentirostral *Passeres*, with descriptions of 78 new species, besides many notes on, and redescriptions of, those imperfectly known. A third part is promised in the beginning of 1869; so that we cannot complain that this important work, so long delayed, when once taken in hand by its present accomplished editor, has been tardily performed.

4. PORTUGUESE.

Professor du Bocage, in the 'Jornal de Sciencias' of Lisbon, continues the valuable series of articles on the ornithology of the Portuguese possessions in West Africa which we have before noticed (Ibis, 1868, p. 345). This third paper on the subject consists of two lists—one of birds collected at Biballa and the neighbourhood, the other of those obtained at Huilla, the furthest point in the interior to which the possessions stretch. Both these collections were formed by the indefatigable Sr. Anchieta, and together they contain examples, among many others, of five species described as new:—*Nectarinia ludvicensis*, *Drymæca anchieta*, *Hirundo angolensis*, *Crateropus hartlaubi* and *Gallinago angolensis*. A description is also given of two specimens which appear to belong to the *Estrela quartinia* of Bonaparte (Consp. Av. i. p. 461), a rare species, of which the only example hitherto known is in the Paris Museum and is said to have come from Abyssinia. The Professor agrees with Mr. Gurney (Ibis, 1864, p. 350, and 1868, p. 45) in maintaining the specific distinction of *Campephaga nigra* and *C. xanthor-*

noides, in opposition to the opinion of Dr. Hartlaub (Orn. West-afr. p. 99), who considered them to be identical.

5. AMERICAN.

The 'Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History' contain a "Synopsis of the Birds of South Carolina" by Dr. Coues, a very acceptable contribution to our knowledge of the North-American Avifauna, as since Catesby's time only one list of the birds of this State seems to have been published, and that list was confessedly nothing more than a compilation. Dr. Coues has had the advantage of making personal investigations, having passed two years at Columbia. He says :—

"The birds of South Carolina, with few exceptions, are the same as those of the South Atlantic and the Gulf States at large (exclusive of certain Texan birds). These exceptions are the Florida Jay, and the several species, not strictly North American, which visit the peninsula of Florida alone, mostly from the West Indies. It is not probable that South Carolina is the terminus of the autumnal emigration of any northern species. The lower swampy parts of Virginia rather represent such terminus ; and any species which passes this boundary is likely to be found in winter any where in the South Atlantic States, exclusive, of course, of such species as pass entirely beyond the United States. And, although the Carolinas, in a general way, limit the northward extension of the few typical species of the South Atlantic States, the boundary may be more definitely placed in Virginia, along the line where the swampy changes to the higher country, which, as we have just seen, limits certain northern species in coming south."

Two hundred and ninety-four species are enumerated by Dr. Coues as occurring in South Carolina ; and brief notes are appended to their names, containing much information on their distribution, particularly as regards the season of their appearance, which, coming from an authority so trustworthy, is eminently useful. The doctor has some remarks on the subject of Shrikes impaling their prey on thorns, which open a question of much interest. Speaking of *Lanius* or *Collurio ludovicianus* he says :—

“At Columbia, where the Loggerhead is a very common bird, frequenting the weedy streets and waste fields of the city, I have observed it on numerous occasions, and once witnessed the following : a Loggerhead was busily foraging for insects in the Capitol yard ; from its observatory, on the top of a tall bush, it pounced upon a large grasshopper, and carried it to a tree near by, which was full of small, sharp twigs. Planting itself upon one of them, with the insect in its beak, the bird thrust the grasshopper upon a twig, pushing the latter quite through the insect’s body by repeated forcible movements. After the grasshopper had been transfixed to the bird’s satisfaction, the latter hopped to another part of the tree, where it remained for some minutes, apparently enjoying the writhings of the impaled insect, or at least waiting to make sure that it was firmly secured. This being evidently the case, the bird at length flew off, resumed its former station, and commenced to hunt for more grasshoppers. Within the next few minutes I saw it capture several more, all of which it ate upon the spot.

“I have not seen any satisfactory explanation of this strange habit of the Shrikes ; nor am I prepared to offer any. Writers have drawn largely upon their imagination in treating of the trait. The facts at our command are conflicting, and do not furnish the basis for any very consistent theory as to the why or wherefore, or, particularly, the *cui bono* of such proceedings on the part of the bird. The commonly received doctrine, to the effect that Shrikes providently lay up in this way a store for future emergencies, is hardly tenable. In the case narrated above, the bird did not return to feast upon the grasshopper ; for I purposely passed that way several days afterward, and saw the unfortunate insect still sticking there. Why did the bird impale it at all ? It was evidently hungry at the time, for, as above stated, it at once recommenced foraging, and captured and devoured several more insects on the spot ; and, moreover, the thousands of live grasshoppers that there were within a radius of as many yards, rendered such special pains in securing that one on a twig quite unnecessary. It may be as well to confess that we do not know the reason of this habit of the Shrikes ; we can only say that it is ‘a way they have.’”

We venture to invite the attention of our readers in various parts of the world to this subject. The cause of Shrikes' shambles is surely not a thing "past finding out."

IX.—*Letters, Announcements, &c.*

WE have received the following letters addressed "To the Editor of 'The Ibis'":—

Simlah, 3 Sept. 1868.

SIR,—In 'The Ibis' for 1868 (page 79) Mr. Beavan gives *Corydalla richardi* as occurring at Simlah, and remarks that the specimens procured by him agreed well enough with Colonel Tytler's. Now, on examining these last, I find them to be examples of *Agrodroma sordida*. Some twenty years ago Mr. Blyth gave Col. Tytler an *Agrodroma sordida* ticketed "*Anthus richardi*"—the tickets of the two species, I suppose, having got exchanged owing to the ministering care of some intelligent native, and Mr. Blyth, before giving the specimen, having failed to see that all was right. This circumstance misled Colonel Tytler; otherwise a single glance at the hind claw would have been sufficient to separate the two species. In *C. richardi* it is from .6 to .95 in. in length, and nearly straight. In *A. sordida* it is about .35 in. long, and moderately curved. I have never obtained *C. richardi* in the neighbourhood of Simlah. It breeds, I know, in Ladak, but it has not yet occurred in any of the collections made for me at Simlah and in its immediate neighbourhood, although in the cold season I have often procured it on the plains.

Further on (page 166) Mr. Beavan says that, according to Col. Tytler, *Corvus intermedius* breeds at Simlah in July and August; but the Colonel tells me that this is a mistake, as he never named those months as the breeding-time. As a matter of fact the species lays in May and June; and by the 10th of July this year the young had all flown, and every nest (and I had nearly a hundred searched) was empty.

In the same volume (page 306) Herr von Pelzeln describes a Falcon from Kotegurh, under the name of "*Falco communis*, Gm.," by which designation I suppose (though I am not sure) him to mean the species generally known as *Falco peregrinus* *.

* [Many ornithologists, it is true, use the name *F. communis* for *F.*